

## Development of the Federation of Democratic Precinct Clubs

The Federation of Precinct clubs movement is making progress:

During the eight weeks since this movement has been started, events have clearly demonstrated the urgent need for a self-supporting and self-governing Federation of Democratic Precinct clubs to include the rank and file of the democrats of the nation who are awake to the need for guarding their interests by un-horsing the holders of special privileges—the special interests. In other words, in thirty-seven states wherein we are starting to organize—the states in which the voters are not in the throes of a campaign—we are receiving the co-operation of eleven democratic national committeemen, eleven chairmen of the democratic state committees, and five secretaries of democratic state committees, within the states of California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maine, Delaware, District of Columbia, Tennessee and Florida, along with the governor in Mississippi, a United States senator in Nevada, in Oklahoma, and in Arkansas, and W. J. and Charles W. Bryan and others in Nebraska; a total of twenty-five states out of thirty-seven and the state of Ohio. Also a large number of congressmen and a few senators are approving and helping to submit the plans. Some of these are located in each of the thirty-seven states. The Commoner and some others of the democratic papers are approving the plan and a large number of papers have given it publicity. That is our eight weeks' record.

The Commoner's strong indorsement of our movement and publication of our charter and club constitution are deeply appreciated. Through joint action let us establish a democratic club in each of the precincts throughout the nation, all federated, with each officer and committeeman subject to recall, along with direct power in the members as to policies through the referendum and initiative within the organization. District and state conferences can be used to stimulate interest.

The reports we are receiving from the several states show that there is an imperative need for organizing the democrats to secure publicity against the deceit of the representatives of the special interests within the party. As long as the members of the democratic party are unorganized they will be comparatively helpless. But when by concerted action of a mere handful in each voting precinct, federated throughout the districts, the states and the nation, they can place truth-telling literature with the rank and file and thereby expose the deceit whereby representatives of the special interests are hoodwinking the members of the party. Then at the primaries the democrats will elect trustworthy men. Publicity is the remedy, supplemented by hard work by public spirited citizens, singly and in clubs.

The units for organization are the voting precinct, the city, the county, and the state, and fellow citizen and reader, we invite you to take part. To accept this invitation will be patriotic and to work for the public welfare will help you individually in many ways. If you will send us your name and address, literature will be sent you to assist in starting the club movement in your precinct.

Following are excerpts from letters received at the national headquarters of the Federation of Democratic Precinct clubs:

Hon. Theodore A. Bell, democratic nominee for governor of California, 1910, writes:

"The plan is undoubtedly a very good one. Our failures in the past have been largely due to the fact that we have sadly neglected the proper kind of organization; hence every democrat who sincerely hopes for party success must welcome every movement that may contribute to a more effectual organization."

Hon. J. D. Botkin, of Winfield, Kan., ex-member of congress and democratic nominee for governor, 1908, says:

"I am more than pleased with your plan for organizing the forces of the progressive democracy. It simply must be done. Our weakness in Kansas is our lack of cohesive organization. Our people have been whipped so often and so badly that they seem disheartened. A year ago in the congressional fight enough democrats stayed at home to have elected me by a large plurality. We ought to win this state next year. I am ready to do all in my power to assist in organizing it."

In a letter from the Second congressional district in Kansas Mr. Botkin writes:

"The special election in this district is to be held

November 7. I feel sure of the election of Mr. Taggart; this will break the spell in Kansas and put us in fighting trim for next year. Many thousands of democrats have failed to vote in recent elections, chiefly for the reason that they have thought it useless to waste the time. Taggart's election will give these men courage and hope. The vote in 1910 was as follows: Alexander Clark Mitchell, 23,282 votes, to 19,852 for John Caldwell, democrat; 2,272 for Kate Richard O'Hare, socialist, and 324 for C. H. Smith, prohibitionist."

Former Mayor W. H. Sebring, of Jacksonville, Fla., writes:

"We are, as a democratic party, in bad shape in Florida—a general disorganization, and we must pull ourselves together. The people are all right, but are split up into factions. You have undertaken a great work and I am with you."

Hon. F. W. McLean, secretary democratic state committee of North Dakota, writes:

"I return herewith the reply card and will say that I am heartily in sympathy with your movement. I will be very glad to do all I can to assist you in inaugurating such a movement. Your warning does not come a day too early. There is already a strong movement on foot to dispose of organizations in western states which are known to be in sympathy with the progressive movement, and to put men in charge who are known to be reactionary."

Hon. John F. Nugent, democratic national committeeman for Idaho strongly indorses the plan and writes:

"I feel that the time for soft words and honeyed phrases has gone by, and that we must fight with every weapon that we have at hand. While in this state the result is doubtful, I hope that we shall be able to give a good account of ourselves when the state convention meets next summer, as I am firmly convinced that an overwhelming majority of the rank and file of our people are progressive democrats. Will say, also, that many of the leaders in this state feel as I do with reference to this matter, and the only thing that can defeat us is the expenditure of a large sum of money."

Lorin A. Handley, city clerk of Los Angeles, Cal., and democratic nominee for congress, 1910, writes:

"So far as this state is concerned, I believe the progressives in the party will control it, though we shall have a desperate fight, not only with the moneyed interests, but with the very cheapest type of moneyed interests."

Fred L. Cox, editor and publisher of the Julesburg News, Julesburg, Colo., writes:

"I am a life-long democrat, past fifty years of age, and a militant one, and I believe that you have struck the keynote of the present situation, and, perhaps, found the solution. I realize that this state needs a little reformation, and the real way to do it is to get nearer to the people and enlist them. Now is the time to organize for next year. If you will send what literature you have, a full outline of your plans, and whatever else may be necessary, I propose to take up the matter in this part of the world, as best my limited scope and ability may allow, and commence a club organization right here and in every precinct in this county. I do not know until it is tried, just what the result will be, but I do know that there are a great many people here, of various shades of political belief, who will hail any movement which looks toward a more full recognition of popular rights."

The president of a large publishing company in Missouri writes:

"I happen to be a New Englander, and my people have been republican as far back as my information goes. I have always heretofore voted the republican ticket, but I am convinced that the republican party has been too long in power, and I expect to vote for a democrat for president in 1912. I should be glad to know more about your project, and if there is a local movement on foot in this locality, I should be glad to get into touch with it."

Hon. N. F. Reed, chairman of democratic state committee of Iowa, writes:

"In advancing the great reforms which in the past have been proposed by the democratic party and which now find expression in the great tidal wave of sentiment that is sweeping over the country, there should be no backward step. I am in hearty sympathy with your plan of organization."

Mr. H. L. Buck, of Winona, Minn., democratic nominee for congress, 1910, writes:

"I think the proposed organization is timely and necessary. I will be glad to co-operate in any way in my power, that the party may positively stand for what its name implies."

Melvin A. Hildreth, of Fargo, N. D., democratic nominee for congress, 1910, writes:

"I am very glad to become a member of the Federation of Democratic Precinct clubs. I agree with you that this is the right way to commence to organize, and the sooner the better, because the democratic party has got to fight not only the common enemy, but they have got to fight or take care of those who get into the lines under the guise of calling themselves democrats when they are in the party for business only. I am very glad to help on with this work, and you can depend upon me."

We earnestly ask you to join the movement and thus help to defend yourself.

Address, Federation of Democratic Precinct Clubs, George H. Shibley, secretary, Bliss Bld., Washington, D. C.

### TRUE AMERICANISM

The Philadelphia North American has grouped extracts from fifteen of Governor Wilson's public addresses in this way:

"We, the people, have not free access enough to our own agents or direct enough control over them. There are barriers to break down and processes to simplify, which we liberals believe we know how to get at. We mean, by one change or another, to make our government genuinely popular and representative again."

"We are cutting away anomalies, not institutions. We are clearing away the jungle and letting in the pure light and air, not destroying the wholesome forest or creating waste places where there was productive growth."

"Such tasks are typically American. It has always been our privilege and our happy capacity to show how they can be done—without revolution, without strife or hatred or injustice, without the necessity of drawing, in De Tocqueville's memorable phrase, 'a single tear or a single drop of blood from mankind.'"

"The main object of what we are attempting, both in state and nation, is to establish a close connection, a very sensitive connection, between the people and their governments, both in the states and in the nation, in order that we may restore in such wise as will satisfy us again the liberty and the opportunity in whose interests our governments were conceived."

"But some men put a false interpretation upon this. There is a certain unreasonable fear in the air, as if the process we have been going through were, in some degree, vindictive; as if there had been bitter feeling in it and the intention to discredit those who opposed it."

"The crash of political organizations has been only the crash of those that did not comprehend, but resisted when there was no right reason for resisting, and forgot that their very reason for being was that they might serve opinion and the movements of the people's will. If any systems of political practice have collapsed, only those have collapsed which were unsuitable to the objects which they professed to serve."

"We are no longer in the temper of attack. We are ready for remedy and adjustment, and begin to see where to begin and in what direction to move. A promise of statesmanship follows a threat of revolution. There can be no mistaking this. Programs are taking the place of philippics; and programs can be soberly examined and assessed, as unqualified criticism and denunciations can not be."

"We look beneath the label to the man and his thought. Whichever party proves most fit to conceive and put through a wise progressive program will become the liberal party of the nation. Tories will be welcome to resort to the other and enjoy the privilege of minority."

"What is necessary in order to rectify the whole mass of business of this kind (the trusts) is that those who control it should entirely change their point of view. They are trustees, not masters, of private property, not only because their power is derived from a multitude of men, but also because in its investments it affects a multitude of men. It determines the development or decay of communities. It is the means of lifting or depressing the life of the whole country. They must regard themselves as representatives of a public power. There can be no reasonable jealousy of public regulation in such matters, because the opportunities of all men are affected."

"It should be recognized as a fundamental principle of our law dealing with corporations that, though we call them artificial persons, the only persons we are really going to deal with in imposing the penalties of the law upon them are the persons who constitute their directors and officers."

"We ought by this time to have seen the futility—I might even say the silliness—of trying to punish illegal action by penalizing corporations as such. Fines punish the stockholder; forfeiture of charter and of the franchise which they are exercising paralyzes industry and confuses business."

"Men do not cease to be individuals by becoming the officers of corporations. The responsibility for violating the law, or for neglecting public interests, ought to fall upon them as individuals."

"Let us clearly recognize and everywhere proclaim that successful business and just politics are not antagonistic. The business of society is co-operation, not warfare and antagonism. If everybody will come with clean hands and a pure purpose into the common game of life, there need be no clash or hurtful rivalry. It is only when a party tries to control